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PRESERVATION

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Newsletter of the Montana
State Historic Preservation Office

Kalispell - 1980

Kalispell's Past—Its Future?

As with most cities today, Kalispell works at simultaneously finding ways to keep its downtown prosperous, its unemployment low, its elderly and handicapped decently housed, and its residents contented with the shape of their community. Using Historic Preservation Funds and Community Development Block Grant funds, Kalispell this summer decided to inventory downtown area buildings to evaluate their architectural and historical qualities. With this information Kalispell will be able to determine what role its rich history and character should play in Kalispell's future. Here, along one block of Main Street, stand buildings, from the Adams Building (far left) to the Masonic Temple (far right), that have survived multiple uses. For seventy-five years or more these buildings have served Kalispell, and with the inventory the community can decide what portions of its history it wishes to preserve; it allows those decisions to be conscious ones.

Kalispell - ca. 1905

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Preservation Office Perspective

by **Marcella Sherfy**

This summer an artist in New York City drew three lines of paint along lower Manhattan's streets, alleys, wharves, and parks to mark the first shape of the island and New Amsterdam. New York needed those lines because so little else could recall for present inhabitants its first European settlement, much less its native residents. Montana needs no such lines. We have—with spectacular richness—what New York, at least for that period, has lost.

Little false-fronted stores, the grand confectionary houses of the rich, shotgun cottages to which miners came home, prairie campsites of 100 or 1,000 years ago, homestead shacks, and pompous brick businesses remain on the Montana landscape. And unlike diaries or letters in humidified storage or museum objects caught behind glass, these places and buildings confront us daily, translating an often mythical, larger-than-life history into a still grand, but very real past.

But Montana's past is complicated, as is the preservation of its site and structural remains. Our past, recent and long ago, embraces the births and deaths and recreations of hundreds of thousands of short-lived settlements and ventures. Hope and adventure have left the remnants of mines and camps, homesteads and ranches, and human travel. Even in our towns we have changed industries and intentions so often that the layers of past crowd each other and keep mixing. Some of these fragments, by virtue of exposure or construction methods, have a short life—one that none of us can artificially prolong. Other resources, by our continued use and adaptation, can be here for generations.

The Montana State Historic Preservation Office, like other divisions in the Montana Historical Society, exists to identify and encourage the preservation of tangible reminders of Montana's rich history. Like the rest of the Society, we struggle with less success than we wish to tell far-flung Montanans about our program and activities.

Hence, we are beginning the newsletter, **Preservation**, as one of several new efforts to reach more people.

Being the recipient of federal dollars and directions, our schedule of work, our fiscal year, and our requirements differ from those of other state organizations. People interested in preservation need to know our administrative rituals well in order to take advantage of them. Also, because many historic resources need to remain actively, but thoughtfully, used or require a specialist's care, preservation is not just the business of designated preservationists, but of realtors, planners, city officials, architects, insurance agents, tax accountants, lawyers, highway engineers, and land managers. So, we wanted a way to communicate with the wide range of people whose interests and skills affect historic resources.

This first issue probably contains more history and explanation of historic preservation that those of you who have worked with preservation really need. It may contain less than those of you new to our office could use. We hope the balance chosen provides enough new or restated information to clear up the often confused images of preservation.

In 1966, after almost seven years of considerating similar legislation, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act. Interestingly enough, the final effective sponsors of the legislation included not just preservationists, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but the United States Conference of Mayors. Passage of the legislation and its provisions reflected fifteen years of accumulated frustration about: a) the rapidity of change in America's landscape in general and the rate at which old building stock was changing; b) the brutal and often unexamined impact that federal dollars and agreements in the form of highway construction, urban renewal, and dam building, had on historic resources and c) the limited breadth of many Americans' perceptions of "historic" resources. In response, the sponsors of the legislation wanted mechanisms to make federal agencies consider historic resources and wanted incentives to encourage private preservation. Specifically, the legislation:
(a) created the National Register of Historic Places as a list of resources significant to communities, states, or the nation worthy of preservation;
(b) required federal agencies whose dollars, actions, or decisions were about to affect properties on or eligible for the National Register to identify the exact impacts involved and seek alternatives either to lessen or avoid the harmful effects;
(c) created a program for preparing and sharing technical information about the care of historic resources; and
(d) created a small federal/state grant-in-aid program to multiply both the local dollars and interest invested in preservation.

Responsibility for establishing an actual program based on the National Historic Preservation Act was given to the National Park Service, Department of Interior. They quickly determined that no federal agency could adequately or thoughtfully identify and look out for significant local resources. Hence, they made State Historic Preservation Offices responsible for identifying significant historic resources, apportioning out federal and state preservation money, providing property owners with preservation information, and working with federal agencies whose actions were affecting historic resources.

In the succeeding fourteen years, almost two dozen other pieces of federal legislation have tapped into the National Register program. They include provisions permitting HUD funds to be used for preservation activities, requiring the General Services Administration to use historic structures for federal office space if possible, and, perhaps most important, changing the tax structure to provide significant incentives for the rehabilitation of commercial historic structures.

Preservation Awards

The State Historic Preservation Office is now accepting nominations for the 1980 Montana Historic Preservation Awards program. Awards will be presented in January 1981, at the Montana Historical Society's Legislative Open House.

The awards program began in 1979. Awards presented that year recognized preservation efforts in rehabilitation, restoration, adaptive reuse, and survey projects as well as individual contributions pertaining to preservation done in the last five years. Awards were given to the Bluestone House, Helena, the C.E. Conrad Mansion, Kalispell, the Milwaukee Depot in Butte, and the Miles City Pumping Plant converted into the Custer County Arts Center. The City of Livingston received a plaque for being the first Montana city to complete an historical and architectural survey. Mr. Harold Thomas, former owner of the Grand Union Hotel in Fort Benton, received an award for the most outstanding contribution to historic preservation.

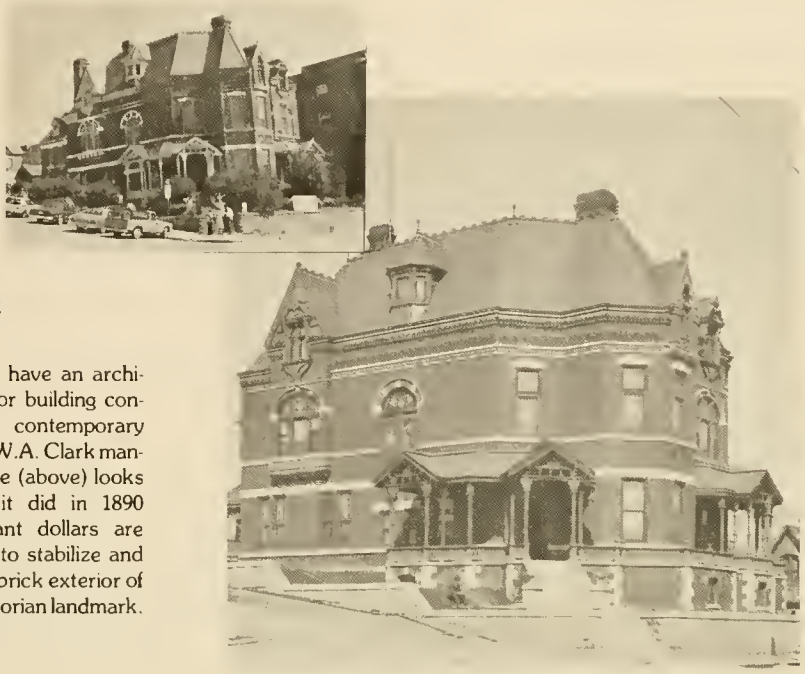
Awards this year will also recognize preservation efforts in two different categories. The first will recognize sound and innovative restoration or rehabilitation projects that have been accomplished with historic structures. The second will recognize either individual or community efforts that have been notable in encouraging and promoting community commitments to preservation.

During times when public money for historic preservation will never be as plentiful as could be used, the award was created a year ago to honor and publicize good preservation work being done throughout the state, regardless of whether private or public money was being expended.

Nomination forms are available from the Montana Historical Society, 225 North Roberts, Helena, Montana 59601 or from local historical societies.

This Summer in Montana

These pictures illustrate just a few of the many preservation projects in Montana this summer. Historic preservation grants, given through the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) of the Department of the Interior, funded projects in West Yellowstone, Fort Benton, Red Lodge, Lincoln County, the Pryor Mountain area, Deer Lodge, Kalispell, Helena, Sun River, Great Falls, Lewistown, Stevensville, and Bannack. In addition, community development funds, city monies, private investment, and volunteer labor have contributed to the projects. Many other preservation efforts are completed wholly with private money, energy and commitment.



Butte

Unless you have an architect's eye for building condition, this contemporary view of the W.A. Clark mansion in Butte (above) looks almost as it did in 1890 (right). Grant dollars are being used to stabilize and restore the brick exterior of this fine Victorian landmark.

Three Forks

The Sacajawea Hotel in Three Forks, an historic structure built in 1910, will be rehabilitated using plans that will respect the building's historical integrity as well as commercial needs.

Billings

Troy

Armed with clipboards, cameras and notepads, volunteers in Billings surveyed neighborhoods in July. These two residences at 39 and 43 Yellowstone Street (left) are good examples of the grand architecture on the city's west side. In Troy this summer the architectural survey discovered this false-fronted building (above) with pressed tin siding made to look like rusticated stone.

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Montana State Historic Preservation Office, though procedurally and financially linked to the federal government, is a state office—a state service. It exists to help Montanans—laymen, scholars, enthusiasts, business people, or students—identify and preserve cultural resources that can illustrate or inform us about the state's history and prehistory. By federal directive, the office must have expertise in history, prehistory, architectural history and architecture. But each expert also must be familiar with specific program activities. In this first issue then, we wanted to introduce the office staff on the basis of the informaton and assistance that each can provide.

The Director of the Montana Historical Society, Dr. Robert Archibald, is appointed by the governor as the State Historic Preservation Officer. The office itself is managed by Marcella Sherfy, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer. Marcella is also the staff historian. Both represent the program to federal and state governments and are responsible for directing and explaining the program and its policies, requirements and positions.

Pat Bick is the staff's architectural historian. She also coordinates our historical and architectural survey work and our National Register nomination program. She is the person to call if you are interested in information on:

- how a property is nominated to the National Register.
- what determines whether a property is eligible for National Register listing.
- how to begin the nomination process if you are interested in a specific property.
- when and why and where surveys to identify a community's or a county's historical and architectural resources are useful and possible.
- what combinations of dollars are available through our office or other sources to undertake surveys.
- whether our files contain information on historic resources potentially significant for their historical associations or their architectural or engineering design.

Jonathan Hayt is the staff architect. He reviews all the proposed and funded grant projects for the restoration or rehabilitation of National Register properties. He also reviews rehabilitation work done within the context of Section 106 compliance and tax reform legislation. Jon should be contacted if you want information on:

- how to get, how we administer, or what requirements for a grant to restore or rehabilitate an historic property listed in the National Register.
- what tax benefits are available for the rehabilitation of National Register properties and what procedures owners have to follow to get those benefits.
- what principles—written up as the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation—should govern physical work done to a National Register property.
- how building code requirements affect historic properties and what routes are available to modify code requirements for significant structures.

Thomas Foor is the State Archeologist. He reviews all information submitted to the office by federal and state agencies in their execution of historic preservation requirements. He specifically reviews and comments on the significance of archeological resources identified in systematic surveys and on methods proposed to avoid or lessen damage that may be done to them by federal, state, or private actions. He should be contacted if you need information about:

- when and how state and federal agencies must consider the effects of their actions on historic or prehistoric resources.
- whether we have reviewed a particular agency project, permit, planning document, or decision that might affect cultural resources.
- what kinds of factors determine the significance of archeological resources.

Tom should be contacted in writing, with specific information on project name, township, range, and section location, if you want to know:

- whether an archeological inventory has been completed in a given area and whether any archeological sites have been identified as a result of inventory processes.

Sara Scott is a staff archeologist. In addition to assisting Tom in his review of agency historic preservation compliance work, she is primarily responsible for reviewing the cultural resource identification work performed by major companies who must identify historic resources in the paths of their projects in order to get federal and state permits for the projects. At the present time, she is reviewing archeological survey work being done in the Northern Border pipeline corridor.

She is available to answer the same kinds of questions that Tom answers, in addition to answering specific questions for state and federal agencies on our review of major energy projects.

Denise Thiel is the office secretary. In addition to keeping up with typing, telephone answering, and office supply work, Denise is familiar with the range of brochures and information available to the public, and can either get information in the mail to you directly or refer you to another staff member.

The State Historic Preservation Office phone number is 449-4584. The office is located in the basement of the Historical Society headquarters around the corner from Territory Junction.

PLEASE SEND ME . . . .

The following leaflets are available for the asking from the State Historic Preservation Office as introductions to various parts of our program.

- ***Montana National Register Fact Sheet.*** *The Implications and Effects of Having a Property Listed in the National Register of Historic Places.*
- ***The National Register of Historic Places.*** *Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. U.S. Department of the Interior.* Another introduction to the National Register Program prepared by the federal government.
- ***Architectural and Historic Inventory Fact Sheet.*** *Why, When, and How a Community, County, or Neighborhood may Want to Begin a Systematic Inventory of Historic Structures.*
- ***Tax Benefits and Historic Preservation.*** This is a series of one page information sheets on tax code provisions that pertain to the rehabilitation of historic properties.

For the above leaflets or other related information please write to the State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Historical Society, 225 North Roberts, Helena, Montana 59601.